

The Ryedale Historian

Number 22

2004-2005



*Helmsley Archaeological
and Historical Society*

*Cover illustration: "Howkeld Mill; York Minster Archives ref. Y/TOP K14/4.
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A Periodical Publication by the
Helmsley Archaeological and Historical Society

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Contents

Page

Editorial

2

Philip Rahtz

Tony Pacitto 1931-2003

3

Robin Wardell

Down the Windy Pit

6

Isabel Anne McLean

*The Millers of Howkeld Water
Corn Mill 1632-1850*

7

*Ed Dennison and
Shaun Richardson*

*Archaeological Recording at
Village Farm Barn, Low Kilburn*

13

Basil Wharton

*Linear Earthwork at Soulby Wood,
Scackleton: Probable site of a
medieval mill.*

18

Reviews

Philip Rahtz

*'Rievaulx Abbey – Community,
Architecture, Memory'*

21

Lorna Watts

*'Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone
Sculpture, Volume VI
Northern Yorkshire'*

23

Anne Taylor

*'Levisham: a case study in local
history'*

25

Recent Publications

26

Forthcoming Publications

26

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Editorial

My first duty as editor of *The Ryedale Historian* must be to offer my sincere thanks to Anne Taylor for all her help and advice regarding my numerous queries concerning the editorial process. Secondly, the society, also wishes to express their gratitude to Anne for all her hard work and commitment to the *Historian* over the past years. Since 1990, (*Ryedale Historian* No 16 1992-1993), Anne has shown her skills both as a writer and editor, the result being a well-presented and professional publication.

Once again, the society gratefully acknowledges North York Moors National Park and Ryedale District Council for their financial support, without which this publication would not be possible.

Contributions, both past and present are a reflection of a passionate interest concerning the archaeology, geology and social history of Ryedale and the surrounding locality. This is a passion that the *Historian* continues to celebrate and promote, and is one which can be associated with the life and work of Tony Pacitto (1931-2003), one to the founding members of the Helmsley Archaeological Society.¹ The first contribution, by Philip Rahtz, is a sensitive and personal account of Tony's life and interests. Philip acknowledges not only the loss of a friend and colleague, but also the loss of local knowledge which Tony possessed as did Raymond H. Hayes (1909-2000).² The bond between Tony Pacitto and Raymond H. Hayes was apparent - see Tony's article on Raymond Hayes (*Ryedale Historian* No 15 1990-1991, 4-5). It is therefore of note that last summer the society visited - and a few brave souls descended - Antofts Windy Pit. Robin Wardell's *Down the Windy Pit* will no doubt rekindle fond memories of the close association and work carried out by Raymond Hayes and Tony Pacitto in the Ryedale Windy Pits.³

Two separate contributions on water corn mills by Isabel Anne McLean and Basil Wharton, *The Millers of Howkeld Water Corn Mill 1632-1850* and *Linear Earthwork at Soulbly Wood, Scackleton: Probable site of a medieval mill* respectively, are complementary. The first researches the social history of Howkeld Mill, whilst the second illustrates the complexity of archaeological field investigation. Ed Dennison and Shaun Richardson's *Archaeological Recording at Village Farm Barn, Low Kilburn* is an architectural survey of a cruck-framed barn prior to its redevelopment. This is an informative contribution, which details the historical background and discusses in depth both the barn's spatial arrangement and the re-use of timbers.

In the review section, attention must be drawn to Lorna Watt's review of the late Professor James Lang's *Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture VI Northern Yorkshire*. This publication of the *Corpus* illustrates the determination and commitment both of its author and the several contributors involved who completed this monumental task during the final stages of Professor Lang's illness.

Finally, two new sections - *Recent* and *Forthcoming publications* - aim to address the time delay between new publications and that of the *Historian*. Any readers who have comments regarding this new section, or who wish to publish their own research material in the next issue, please contact me (address overleaf).

Carol Colbourne.

¹ Originally the Helmsley and District Group of the Yorkshire Archaeological Society.

² See Pete Wilson's article 'Raymond Hayes: An appreciation' in *The Ryedale Historian* No21 2002-2004, 3-4).

³ See *History of Helmsley, Rievaulx and District*. J McDonnell (ed) York 1963.

TONY PACITTO 1931-2003

by Philip Rahtz

Tony Pacitto was one of the best-known and admired archaeologists in Yorkshire. Archaeology was, however, one of Tony's many skills. He was a Renaissance character, with skills also in electronics, radio, mechanical engineering, caving, shooting and photography (notably from the air). He died on October 14, 2003 of prostate cancer. He told us that his illness had been diagnosed in 2000, but he was really sick only during the last few weeks of his life.

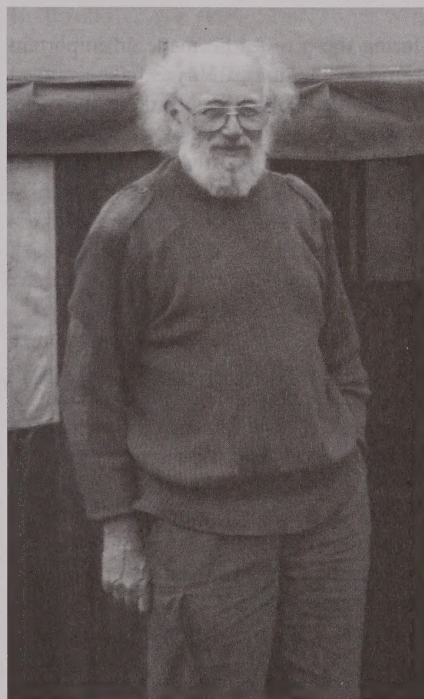
Tony was born in Middlesbrough on October 18 1931. Although universally known as Tony, he was christened Anthony Laughton. The last name was in honour of the film star, Charles Laughton, who was related to Tony's mother. She came from a distinguished Yorkshire family; another of her relatives was the former Labour Prime Minister, Harold Wilson.

Tony's father's family originally came from Italy, from Monte Cassino. He had very little part in Tony's upbringing. His parents separated when Tony was only 3; his mother returned to live in Helmsley, her home before her marriage.

Helmsley Castle gave Tony his first archaeological focus. In his childhood he roamed around the castle area and Duncombe Park. One of his early friends was Mr Claridge, who tells me that Tony was 'into' everything around him, including natural history; he even reared an abandoned owl. He was always mending things and taking them to pieces, and he also experimented with gunpowder!

For a short time he went to a small school which was located in what are now the National Park headquarters; but he was mostly educated by his mother; he never gained any formal educational certificates.

In the Second World War, he observed closely the military encampments in the grounds, and the earthworks, which were intended to 'defend' Helmsley, which was to be a key strongpoint if the Germans invaded Britain. Tony was one of the few people recently who was able to point out the features remaining of these defences, mostly long obliterated.



Tony Pacitto

After the war, on a visit to York, he met Peter Wenham, with whom Tony had his first experience of archaeology. In the later 1950's and 1960's he went on the 'circuit' of rescue diggers for the then Ministry of Works working with archaeologists such as John Wachter. He worked with me at Whitby Abbey in 1958, where we extended the known area of the Anglo-Saxon monastery

and located a Middle Saxon cemetery. Also in 1958, we collaborated in the excavation of the barrow at Little Ouseburn in West Yorkshire. We both stayed in the dismal pub there, and gathered that it was well-known as being haunted. Here Tony showed another of his skills, as inventor. Shortly after I had gone to bed, one of the cotton reels on a shelf mysteriously fell onto the floor. My neck hairs prickled, and I got up to investigate. It turned out that he had rigged up a complicated series of cotton threads and rollers, which I traced, back to his bedroom where he manipulated the gadget to frighten me!

During these times he made an important friend in Raymond Hayes. Their joint remarkable explorations of the Windy Pits were something between caving and archaeology. Tony also excavated the well at Rudston Roman villa; here his inventive genius and mechanical engineering skills allowed the excavation of the well to reach 30ft below the water table.

At Beadlam, Tony was the first person to realise that undistinguished overgrown remains of wall foundations were in fact all that was left of a Roman villa, which he helped to excavate in subsequent years.

The most important contact he made, in 1956, was Ian Stead, with whom he worked for over 40 years, principally on Iron Age sites. These included a number of square-ditched barrows, a few of which had chariot burials.

They worked together in France, in the 1970's. Ian recalls how 'Tony found sites from the air, photographed excavations and finds, and rescued many of our fleet of ancient cars'. They also went to village fetes. 'For Tony the main attraction was the shooting stall. Tony would examine the guns very carefully, establish their defects, and use the best one to walk off with all the prizes (he was a crackshot - Bisley medallist). Quite soon the stallholder would bribe him

with bottles of wine if only he would go away and do something else!'

In the 1980's he became interested in geophysics. He invented an automatic recording device mounted on wheels, which enabled him to survey large areas at relative speed. He also used dowsing rods, with which he located, at Rudston, a lost contact lens! He used his geophysical skills to good effect when he worked with Ian at Snettisham. Their task was, for the British Museum, to follow up metal detectorists' discoveries of Iron Age gold hoards by geophysical survey and further excavation; and to get ahead of the metal detectors to retrieve ones that had not already been robbed. Tony claimed that he had handled more gold (sometimes objects kilos in weight!) than any other British archaeologist.

Tony extended his use of cameras to aerial photography; he built up a huge collection many of them of East Yorkshire; they are of high quality and have been incorporated in the National Monuments Record.

Freedom to follow his own bent was important. The only long-term job he had was as a technician in the Department of Archaeology at the University of Leicester. It was a non-demanding job involving (among other tasks) the making of slides, and he left after one year. The other job was as a Field Warden for English Heritage in North Yorkshire but he became too interested in finding and mapping new sites, which was not what was required! He never acquired any formal archaeological qualifications. His achievement was however recognised as election in 1979 to a Fellowship of the Society of Antiquaries of London (FSA).

I came to the University of York in 1978 and was quickly again in touch with Tony. When I retired to Harome, a few miles from his home at Hovingham, he lectured to the Helmsley Archaeological Society and took them on local excursions. A field expedition with him was memorable - he was very

knowledgeable about the whole Ryedale area; he continued up to his final months to initiate local research on the water-pumping system in Duncombe Park, the Cistercian river diversions at Rievaulx, and the Roman villa and Anglo-Saxon church at Hovingham. He joined us in our research at St Gregory's Minster, Kirkdale making invaluable surveys of the fields around the church. His base in the field was a large van, with generators, batteries and a lap-top computer!

Although archaeology of all periods took up a lot of Tony's life, there were other occupations, notably in amateur radio. At Hovingham, he used an outhouse for his station. This was crammed with complex hardware, much of it ex-military equipment bought in auctions and carboot sales - his favourite habitat. From this Aladdin's cave, wires led to a forest of aerials, including an aerial extending right up to the summit of the hill behind his house! With this formidable array of equipment he talked

long into the night to other radio enthusiasts all over the world, cultivating an international network of friends.

Tony met his wife Sheila, at a class in Ryedale. He married her at St Oswald's Church in Ampleforth; she was highly patient with his multivarious activities; Tony was entirely reliant on her in his last weeks, keeping him at home to the end and (to quote again Ian Stead) 'preserved the dignity of his independent spirit'. They had two children, Mary and Tom, now grown up, but not following in their father's occupation.

In Ryedale, we remember Tony with considerable affection as a friend and colleague and also as the teller of numerous stories. A number of them were about Raymond Hayes and even more about Tony Brewster, tales that brought us laughing almost to tears. We shall miss greatly, as the third (with Hayes and Brewster) of the living legends that have left us in recent years.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

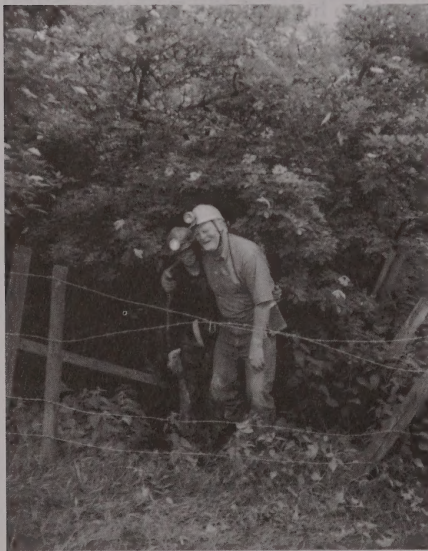
I am indebted to Ian Stead for permission to quote from his oration at Tony's funeral on October 14, 2003.

DOWN THE WINDY PIT

by Robin Wardell

On a fine Saturday morning in June 2003, a small intrepid group of Helmsley Archaeological and Historical Society members met at Antofts Farm near Helmsley to explore the nearby windy pit. There are more than twenty pits in the Corallion rocks overlying Oxford Clay - the pits are a series of near-vertical fissures in the oolitic limestone and emit strong gusts of air especially on crisp winter days.

After paying our dues to the British Cavers Society, we were kitted-out with hard hats and miners' lamps. Following overnight rain, the first part of the descent, by a letter-box squeeze at the foot of the quarry face, was quite wet and slippery. As we climbed over or squeezed past fallen boulders our lamps picked out the debris on the floor of the pit - a scatter of bones with large blue flies and hunger-looking spiders; the entrance was originally choked with the offal of slaughtered deer.



Daylight at last.

Robin Wardell (Right) and a relieved Carol Colbourne (Left) return to the surface.
Photo courtesy of Alan Pitman.

Fortunately, we had not read the warning in the recently published 'Moorland Caver' by Gibbs and Stewart that 'the main rift in Antofts appears to be still geologically active. Explorers should be aware of a very real danger from falling boulders and unstable/unconsolidated chokes- you have been warned!' (Gibbs and Stewart 2003, 2).

Then came the first real challenge - a twenty metre sheer drop into the bowels of the earth by means of a flimsy-looking wire ladder on which we swung precariously whilst struggling to maintain our grip. All members successfully negotiated the hazard and were rewarded with the sight of a hearth-stone in a small side-chamber surrounded by charcoal (which has an uncalibrated carbon date of 1750 +/- 150bc), were our ancestors seeking shelter and refuge or perhaps a ritual searching of Mother Earth? A short corkscrew descent led us down to the fissure floor some thirty-five metres below the entrance.

The long haul back to the surface commenced using muscles, which has lain dormant for many a day. It was a tired and mud-stained group that re-emerged into the June sunshine some two hours after entering the pit. However, we congratulated each other on our achievement and were agreed that it had been a memorable and rewarding experience.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The editor would like to thank Graham Lee, Archaeological Conservation Officer, North York Moors National Park Authority, for his help regarding the carbon date and the reference.

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THE MILLERS OF HOWKELD WATER CORN MILL 1632-1850

by Isabel Anne McLean

Howkeld mill at Welburn near Kirkbymoorside belonged to the Cistercian abbey of Rievaulx, at whose suppression in 1538 it was worth £2 13s 4d.¹ Four hundred years later Herbert Read's autobiography, *The Innocent Eye*, described the mysterious source on which the mill depended:

About half a mile above the Church [St Gregory's Minster in Kirkdale] the beck suddenly slackens; part of its waters (in Summer all) disappear down a fissure in the rocky bed. They keep to a subterranean channel for a mile and a half and suddenly reappear, bubbling up from a great depth, at the head of a field which belonged to my Uncle, whose small estate was on that account called Howkeld, which means 'springhead'.²

After the Dissolution Account of the abbey, made in 1539, the first local reference to the mill that I have found comes in a manuscript of 1649 in which Sir John Gibson of Welburn Hall granted an annuity of £40 to Kirkdale Minster ("the Minister of Welbourne") as a composition for his "delinquency". By supporting the Royalist side in the Civil Wars he had offended the Puritan Parliament at Westminster. The indenture gives a detailed description of the lands of Welburn manor including Starr Foot, Pipestone Bancke, Howborough, Howkell Crooks, "one house standinge by Kerdall Church with a garth and two closes" and "two Water Mills standinge both under a Roofe called Hawkell Millnes with Socke and Dames".³ This tells us that the mill had two water wheels.

It probably changed very little over the next two centuries. About the year 1833 it was destroyed in a fire but we have two records of its appearance prior to that. Firstly, there

is an engraving⁴ of 1825 by George Nicholson (Plate 1), who sketched several water mills in Ryedale. Secondly, in 1858 our local antiquarian, Thomas Parker, recalled the mill as it had been "about 25 years ago", before the fire: "The old Mill was of ancient frame work with a high pitched roof covered with thatch having a water wheel at each end."⁵

During these centuries the millers at Howkeld sometimes owned the small mill, and sometimes were only tenants. The earliest miller known to me was Matthew Haldure whose residence on the baptisms of his four daughters between 1632 and 1638 was "Howkell Mill" or "Howkull Mill".⁶ In the 1880s Parker wrote: "On a stone [presumably rescued from the old mill and inserted in the new one] in the west part of the building is these initials M.S. for Mathew Snowdon M.F. for Mathew Foord and J.P. for John Potter and the dates 1681, 1702 and 1799....According to Tradition the Masters of Howkeld Mill since the time of Mathew Haldure are [these three]."⁷ Kirkdale Minster's parish registers show that Matthew Snowdon's five children were baptised between 1673 and 1687 but only in the case of Margaret, baptised 24 June 1675, was a place of residence given: Welburn. One small suggestive piece of evidence for Snowdon being the miller is that he had two hearths in 1673, perhaps one for the mill and another for the mill house.⁸ Another is that his grandson, John Snowdon, was to buy the mill in 1758.

The last of the nine children born to Matthew Foord, the next supposed miller, were twin daughters, Ann and Joanna, baptised⁹ 9 November 1703, their father's residence being given only as Welburn, not the mill. An entry for 8 October 1712 gives "Matthew Foord bury'd".¹⁰ My feeling is that neither Matthew Snowdon nor Matthew Foord

owned the mill. When Foord's widow farmed on her own account after 1712 she had inherited a Kirkbymoorside manor copyhold farm at Gillamoor and a copyhold farm at Welburn. She referred to the latter in her will¹¹ of 1741 as being held under James Gibson, together with two closes held under Mr Hill of Thornton Dale who owned part of Welburn manor. Her son, also Matthew Foord, inherited no freehold property.¹² It seems likely that either the Gibsons or the Hills owned the mill in the early eighteenth century. (Incidentally, in 1996 a much later owner of Welburn Hall, Major John Shaw, showed me a worn millstone which he had removed to his garden at Keld Spring; it carried the date 1683. Another millstone stood outside the mill in 1996; it bore the date 1766).

Who worked the mill after Foord's death in 1712?

The first trace comes in 1734 with the baptism¹³ of Ann, daughter of Robert Easton who resided at "Hockhill-mill". Easton had formerly held the tenure of Kirkby Mills mill.¹⁴ A second daughter, Margaret, was born in 1736. Robert Easton made his will¹⁵ in February 1737/8. He owned both the mill and the mill house. An inventory after his death showed the house to consist of kitchen, forehouse, milk house, parlour and three chambers which all had bedsteads and hangings. In the mill stood corn and wheat: this was a corn mill. A cart and a sledge, three horses (£4), eight sheep (£1.15.0), a pig (7 shillings) and three cows completed the tally. Easton left "my Mill Damms Streames of water and watercourses with the Mill Holme and Ellars" to his wife Ann and to her brother John Jackson of Pickering. But the property was left to them with a condition attached:

Upon this especiall confidence and Trust in them reposed That they shall...deliver unto Thomas Duncombe Esquire his heirs and assignes on or before the Twenty

fifth day of March next or upon the request of the sd. Mr Duncombe a good and sufficient Estate and Title in Law in Fee Simple (in pursuance of certain Articles of Agreement entered into by and between me and the sd. Thomas Duncombe And upon this farther Trust that they shall performe the Covenants contained in the said Articles on my part to be performed) of all the said Mill Damms [etc] thereto belonging (or otherwise to sell & dispose thereof).

The last words, in brackets, are an interlineation added, it would seem, as an afterthought. It looks decidedly as though Easton had made an agreement on paper with the owner of the Duncombe Park estate that Duncombe would have the right to buy the mill when and if the occasion of its sale arose - or at the very least have the right of first refusal. The latter may in fact have happened but it would surprise me, since the estate pursued a vigorous policy of adding to its holdings in the Kirkbymoorside area throughout this period. Furthermore, in 1794 an heir of Thomas Duncombe's would apparently force the then owner of Howkeld mill to sell it to him (see below).

Whatever the truth of the matter, the executors did not sell the mill until twenty years had passed. In 1758 Ann Easton and John Jackson sold it to John Snowdon, malster and owner of the White Horse inn at Kirkbymoorside. Ann was living at Ellerburn with her daughters. According to the memorial of the sale¹⁶ the tenant at Howkeld was John Peirson. How long he had been miller we cannot know, but he now moved from Howkeld to Hold Caldron mill where, as Joseph Foord's subtenant, he was fined¹⁷ in 1761 for letting his pigs run free and damaging John Richardson's cow pasture.

John Snowdon was the grandson of Matthew Snowdon, the seventeenth-century miller at



Plate 1: Howkeld Mill by George Nicholson (1825)

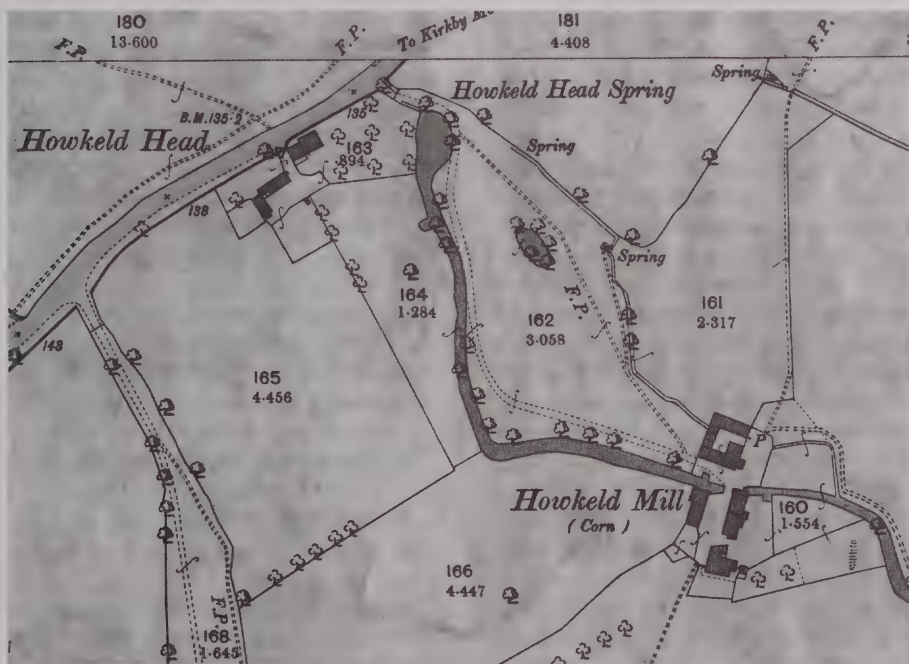


Plate 2: Ordnance Survey 1st edition 25" map (1893)

Howkeld. At Hutton le Hole in 1727 his father, also John, had married¹⁸ a Quaker from Moorsome Meeting, Rachael Stonehouse. At that time John Snowdon I was farming at Welburn ("husbandman" in his marriage entry). Their son, John Snowdon II, was born¹⁹ there in 1727, and a daughter, Rachael, in 1729²⁰. From 1731 onwards John Snowdon I's name appeared in the Kirkbymoorside Preparative Meeting minute book, where he was "John Snowdon of Welburn" to distinguish him from "John Snowdon of Harome", engaged in the smooth running of the Meeting. He moved from Welburn at some time. In 1744 the civil authorities ordered: "The dwelling house of John Snowdon in Kirby Moorside is appointed a Meeting House for the religious worship of the people called Quakers."²¹ Quaker faith and practice were clearly central to this Snowdon's life. On his death in 1751 his wife inherited land he owned in Peterborough and the copyhold house in which they lived in Piercy End at Kirkbymoorside. To his daughter Rachael he left £150. To John Snowdon his son he left "all my Estate in housing lying...in New Malton...and also One Close or parcel of ground called by the name of Beckfield Holme in the parish of Kirkdale."²² He left his family in secure, if modest, prosperity.

His son, John Snowdon the miller, was to behave in most un-Quakerly fashion, wasting his inheritance and declining in old age into a bullying schoolmaster. The Quaker records show that his wife, Ann, bore him eight children, three at Kirkbymoorside and the rest, beginning with Daniel on 27 June 1758,²³ at Howkeld mill. This followed on Snowdon's purchase of the mill in April (see reference 16). It may be that his mother helped him financially, since she was living at the mill in October when he settled an annuity on her (a rent charge on the mill).²⁴ If one can trust Parker's account (but he was relying on oral history a century after the event), John Snowdon had frittered away most of his inheritance before buying the mill:

... getting the money into his hat [he] cried out in a transport of Joy I shall never get through it; but being a Spendthrift twas soon gone, and his large Family brought up by the charitable contributions of the Society of Friends. He retired in his adversity to Howkeld mill house.²⁵

Memorials in the North Riding Register of Deeds record a flurry of financial transactions in Snowdon's life: a series of mortgages²⁶ between October 1758 and November 1759 raised on the mill house at Howkeld, the Mill Close and the woody piece of ground called Ellers. Some of the memorials make it absolutely clear that Snowdon was both the miller and the mill owner. In 1760 he sold²⁷ Beckfield Holme. On 7 April 1762 he repaid ("discharged") the first mortgage of 1758 from John Richardson, the farmer at Lund Cote in Kirkdale; but it looks as though he was able to do so only by having sold²⁸ Howkeld on the previous day to John Richardson of Great Ayton, the son of John Richardson of Lund Cote (This son of Richardson had married Snowdon's sister some ten years earlier, their intention of marrying being communicated²⁹ in 1752 to the Quakers of Kirkbymoorside). Snowdon's mother moved from Howkeld to live with her daughter at Great Ayton. In 1762 Snowdon's behaviour was displeasing the Quakers of Kirkbymoorside:

John Snowdon of Howkil Mill having for some time neglected to attend our Religious Meetings and some Reports having been spread concerning him reproachful to ye Society some Friends made him a visit and report that they did not meet with ye satisfaction they desired.³⁰

Things were going from bad to worse for Snowdon, though he was still the miller at Howkeld. But in 1765 John Richardson of

Great Ayton sold³¹ the mill out of the family to Thomas Smith of Wilton mill, near Kilton in Cleveland. The tripartite release lists John Snowdon of Howkeld mill and “Rachael Snowdon of Great Ayton widow mother of the said John Snowdon.” I suspect that Snowdon was now superseded as miller by Smith; but Snowdon does not seem to have been made to remove his family from the mill house, since his son, William, was born there in 1768 according to Quaker records.³² Parker records that the mill house was partly blown down in the gales of the New Year 1775 and that Snowdon moved afterwards to Howkeld Head, a group of labourers’ cottages next to the mill pond, “where he kept a school at the last end of his days. He was a very severe Master, chastising the male part of his Students with a huge Birch Rod over their naked posteriors...despite their screams and supplications.”³³ This cantankerous spendthrift was buried³⁴ in the Quaker burial ground in Kirkbymoorside in 1801, being taken there from Howkeld Head.

The next trace of the millers of Howkeld comes in 1777 with its sale³⁵ to Francis Dickson of Westow. The memorial of the transaction shows that a widow, Mary Smith, was living at Howkeld mill and that “John Potter of Howgill Mill” was the new miller. Presumably Thomas Smith had moved from Kilton to take up his duties as miller after his purchase in 1765 but had recently died. Potter was to be the Howkeld miller for nearly fifty years. He had previously been at Hold Caldron mill in Kirkdale. When he and Jane Hick married in 1774 in Ellerburn church, near Thornton Dale, the register described him as “of the Parish of Kerdale Miller.”³⁶ The Potters’ first child was born there in 1775.³⁷ Seven more were to be born at Howkeld mill between 1777 and 1790.

In 1780 Dickson sold³⁸ the mill to the trustees of Richard Potter of Westow. The identical surname is almost certainly a coincidence. (I say this with feeling, having spent weeks tracing various Potter families in Westow and Kirkbymoorside). For the

next thirteen years John Potter at Howkeld was enrolled in the land tax assessments as both “proprietor” and “occupier” of land at Welburn, paying seventeen or eighteen shillings each year.³⁹ Researchers know that they cannot rely on “proprietor” meaning ‘owner’ in the tax rolls. Despite Parker (see below) assuming that Potter owned Howkeld, the North Riding Register of Deeds shows that he did not. In 1794 Richard Potter, gentleman of Westow, sold⁴⁰ the Howkeld estate to Charles Slingsby Duncombe by lease and release on 4 and 5 April. In the same year Duncombe appeared as the proprietor in the land tax rolls, with Potter as merely the occupier. Presumably Potter had been paying his rents to Richard Potter in distant Westow prior to this, and the local collector of the tax did not realise that he was not the owner. This dry, paper transaction was possibly the result of a brazen exercise in power. Parker wrote that, according to tradition, John Potter

purchased Howkeld Mill from the Hills of Thornton [this appears not to have been the case] ...but could not get on for want of corn to grind [;] he was obliged to sell it to the Duncombes of Duncombe Park who had bidden their Tenantry not to give one single bushel to Moulture. Such is the trials and troubles of this nether world [;] when Landlord he must starve when Tenant he could live.⁴¹

It should be remembered that Duncombe’s father had apparently made arrangements to buy the mill from Robert Easton prior to that miller’s death; the circumvention of his wishes at that time may have rankled with the Duncombe family - and Potter’s inability to find custom was the result fifty years later. By 1796 a Duncombe Park estate field book⁴² showed Potter paying £56.7s.8d rent for the mill and twenty-five acres of land. Fields called Monkmires and Monkman memorialised the mill’s medieval ownership. Potter appeared in estate rentals

and field books for over thirty years. He certainly prospered, his will⁴³ leaving £500 to three daughters and £50 to each of his five grand-daughters; to his son, Richard, he left a freehold house in the Beast Market in Kirkbymoorside. In 1825 “John Potter widower of Howkeld Mill aged 79”⁴⁴ was buried in All Saints’ churchyard in the town.

His son, Richard Potter, was to continue the family tradition from 1825 to 1850. He radically altered the old thatched mill in about the year 1833, “rebuilt by the late Richard Potter upon the scite [sic] of the old one burned down”, according to Parker.⁴⁵ When the mill was converted to a dwelling house in the 1990s, the builder and owner said that he found charred timbers which had been re-used as lintels in the past (letter from Graham Storrie to the author). The mill now had a single waterwheel. I do not know whether the new mill house was built by Richard Potter or his father or the Duncombes but it looks like a traditional farmhouse of the early nineteenth century, built of local limestone, with a pantiled roof. According to Parker, the old one had been finally demolished in 1783.

I hope to write in the future of how Richard Potter’s son, John Potter, miller at Howkeld until 1869, was responsible for training Richard Cussons of Salton Lodge Farm as his apprentice. In due course this lad was to marry into the family of Herbert Read whose close childhood encounters with Howkeld mill were to feed into some of his best imaginative works, *The Innocent Eye* (1933) and *The Green Child* (1935).

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am grateful to the Dean and Chapter of York for permission to reproduce the engraving of George Nicholson’s ‘Mill at Howkeld, Yorkshire (1825) and to use the material in the Hailstone Collection in the Minster Archives. I thank both the Borthwick Institute of Historical Research, University of York, and the North Yorkshire County Record Office for permission to quote from documents in their care.

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- ¹⁰ PR/KRD 1/3.
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- ¹³ 27 Oct 1734, PR/KRD 1/3.
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ARCHAEOLOGICAL RECORDING AT VILLAGE FARM BARN, LOW KILBURN

by Ed Dennison and Shaun Richardson

Introduction

In April 2001 Ed Dennison Archaeological Services were commissioned to undertake a programme of archaeological recording at Village Farm barn, Low Kilburn (NGR SE51227972), prior to the re-development of the site. The project involved a detailed architectural survey of the Grade II listed cruck-framed barn, together with an archaeological watching brief carried out during the conversion of it and the adjacent farm buildings. The work was funded by Paul Renshaw Building Services. The following text is a summary of the archive survey report which is lodged with the North York Moors National Park Sites and Monuments Record (Dennison & Richardson 2001).

Location

The site is located at the north end of Low Kilburn village, on the edge of an

unclassified road which runs to Bagby. The site comprised a number of farm buildings, most of which appeared to be later 19th century structures, although the barn on the road frontage contained the remains of a cruck frame which the listed building description noted was probably of 16th century date (Plate 1). The barn had been visited by the North Yorkshire and Cleveland Vernacular Buildings Study Group in 1969, and they classified the crucks as having a "Type C" apex form, namely blades held by a saddle or yoke carrying only a ridge piece (NYCVBSG index no 871). It had also been suggested that the barn incorporated re-used masonry from Byland Abbey or one of its granges.

Historical Background

Early to mid 19th century depictions of the site appear to shown the cruck-framed barn lying adjacent to the road, with a number of other buildings, including a house, to the

south-east and north. By the time of the 1856 Ordnance Survey 6" map, the road past the site had become straightened, and the cruck-framed barn formed part of a longer range of buildings positioned parallel to and on the road frontage. A second range ran off at right-angles from the south-east end, and there were further buildings adjacent to this. The 1857 census records that the house was occupied by William Braithwaite, a 50 year old blacksmith, and his 80 year old father, amongst others (NYCRO 2371 f382).

Many of the buildings shown in 1856 were evidently demolished in the later 19th century, as the 1913 Ordnance Survey 25" map (sheet 104/3) shows the site to have assumed its current layout, with only the cruck-framed barn surviving from the earlier complex. Minor changes notwithstanding, the site remained relatively unaltered until its development in 2001.

Site Description

The barn is approximately rectangular in plan, with maximum external dimensions of 11.05m east-west by 5.80m north-south, and is of a single storey, the east gable surviving to a height of c.5.60m above the external ground level. The surviving parts of the roof were steeply pitched and covered with pantiles until the mid 1990s. The walls were built primarily of local sandstone, laid as roughly squared and coursed rubble, and they incorporated a number of re-used moulded or shaped pieces from another building. Both the north and south walls have a low 0.50m high "plinth" into which the padstones of the cruck trusses were set.

The interior of the barn was divided into three bays by the three surviving trusses; the eastern truss was buried within the east gable. All three trusses were originally of the same form, consisting of a pair of cruck blades c.5m in length rising from padstones set into the internal faces of the north and south walls (Plate 2). Each pair of blades was linked by a tie-beam and collar, both

joined to the west face of the blades by halved lap-joints (Plate 3). Each collar carried a pair of purlins and the blades rose to a saddle with a horizontally set ridge-piece (Plate 4). Subsequent decay meant that many elements of the trusses had collapsed. The purlins survived only between the central and eastern trusses, as did several older common rafters, whilst the ridge-piece projected only a short distance to the west of the western truss. At a later date, probably during the 19th century, a pigeon loft had been inserted into the roof space at the east end of the building. It was clear that the majority of the cruck blades and other major timbers within the trusses were re-used from another structure.

Cartographic evidence indicates that, with the exception of the barn, the majority of the other existing structures on the site were built between 1856 and 1913, probably partly re-using materials from the earlier buildings that they replaced. This hypothesis was supported by the architectural survey which showed that they all appeared to have had agricultural functions, and were originally constructed around an open foldyard, that was subsequently roofed over.

Some earthworks and other features within the site were likely to represent the remains of the buildings shown on the 1856 Ordnance Survey map. This was confirmed by the subsequent watching brief, although the linear ditches and wall alignments were poorly defined and often slight.

Discussion

As stated above, the trusses of the cruck barn contained a great deal of re-used timber. A large amount of re-used stonework was also evident in parts of the barn and the adjacent late 19th century farm buildings. Some of this stonework could be late medieval in date, although the majority is probably of the 17th century. The most obvious source of this material is the farm complex shown on the site in 1856, which was largely



Plate 1: General view of barn, looking north-west



Plate 2: Base of cruck blade in western truss



Plate 3: South side of western truss, looking south-east



Plate 4: General view of roof structure, looking east

demolished to make way for the existing farm buildings. It is therefore possible that the earliest substantial stone buildings were erected during the 17th century, and that they survived, with modifications, until the mid to late 19th century. Tithe information and census returns show that at least one of these buildings was a house, whilst the others were probably agricultural in nature.

The only structure to remain from the complex of buildings shown in 1856 was the cruck-framed barn. The earliest surviving parts are the cruck frames themselves, and these re-used timbers may have originated from an earlier building on the site, or could have been brought to the site from elsewhere in the village. The trusses were originally supported by padstones set into a low rubble “plinth” or foundation wall on the longer north and south sides of the building, and it is assumed that the gables were also originally of stone rubble. Features within the surviving timbers suggest that the barn may originally have been five bays in length rather than the existing three, with a steeply pitched thatched roof.

Although the majority of surviving cruck-frames in North Yorkshire are found in houses, there is no surviving structural evidence to indicate that the barn was originally anything other than an agricultural building. The listed building description assigned a 16th century date to the barn, on the basis of the cruck frame. However, crucks are notoriously difficult to date without dendrochronological analysis or detailed documentary references; the “Type C” apex form displayed in the barn is thought

to be a relatively late development, and the face-pegged splayed scarf joints within the trusses have been noted in Yorkshire buildings ranging from the 15th to the mid 18th century (Alcock 1973, 22-23; Hutton 1981, 30). A later rather than earlier date is therefore suggested for the barn, perhaps the early to mid 17th century, although it has clearly been subject too much later alteration.

The re-use of the earlier cruck timbers within the barn may demonstrate a process noted in other parts of the region. In West Yorkshire, for example, re-used cruck timbers often occur in 17th century yeomanry houses, and it has been suggested that this level of society was able to re-build their accommodation as a result of increased wealth, replacing the earlier cruck-framed dwellings of their ancestors with superior houses, the crucks being used in the later structures (RCHME 1986, 42-43). The same process may have occurred at Low Kilburn, with earlier cruck-framed houses and other structures being rebuilt in stone during the 17th century, and some of the timbers re-used to construct the barn. The surviving fragments of early stonework within the farm complex indicate that the 17th century stone buildings on the site, particularly the house, may have been of upper yeomanry status, although this was not supported by the slight building remains uncovered by the watching brief. However, these stone fragments could also have been brought in from elsewhere in the vicinity, although no evidence was found to support the suggestion that the site incorporated re-used masonry from Byland Abbey or one of its ganges.

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LINEAR EARTHWORK AT SOULBY WOOD, SCACKLETON (SE 646739): PROBABLE SITE OF A MEDIEVAL MILL AT SCACKLETON

by Basil Wharton

Situated approximately 23km north of York, 18km west of Malton, Soulby Wood is part of a 1km long strip of ancient 'semi-natural' woodland between the villages of Coulton and Scackleton (Fig 1). It lies along the southern slope of a valley which trends north-eastward towards Hovingham village. The adjoining Mill Wood extends westward up the valley past Coulton Mill, and formerly there was some open ground between the two; the area was planted with conifers c.1960, leaving some remnants of hazel coppice and a few mature oaks (Fig 2). The area is almost certainly ancient 'semi-natural' woodland as presently defined. Since Hovingham Estate purchased the area in 2000, there has been some further felling and replanting.

Prompted by information from a local resident Mrs Mairi McCormick, members of Helmsley Archaeological Society and the Yorkshire Philosophical Society's Woodland History Group visited Soulby Wood and Mill Wood in 1995 and 1996 intending to examine prominent earthworks along part of the woodland margin, and to assess the present botanical status of the wood. Reference to the 1993 survey by the Howardian Hills Historic Landscape Project showed that mounds in this vicinity had been recorded as probable quarry spoil, but there appears to be confusion in the map reference given in the survey's report.¹ The earthworks are not shown on any maps so far examined, but it was noted that they occupy a 250m recess (between points **B** and **C** Fig 2) in the Coulton side of the parish boundary with Scackleton, a boundary clearly defined on both the first edition and current Ordnance Survey maps (hereafter OS). Several of the visitors' thought that the form of the bank and ditch were most probably to be explained as a mill leat and possible mill site.

The first edition and subsequent OS maps show other anomalies in the Coulton/Scackleton parish boundary. For most of its length, this boundary is seen to lie along the course of the beck, which meanders over the valley floor. But from the west end of Mill Wood (**A** Fig 2) almost to the north east corner of Soulby Wood (**C** Fig 2) the parish boundary coincides with the fence enclosing the woodland area, and so is set back from the stream. It is evident on the ground that **A** marks the beginning of the leat, which supplied Coulton Mill. From **A** there is a dry trace of the natural stream course, until 200m short of the extant but the derelict overshot mill-wheel stream breaks out of the leat (stonework here might be the remnant of a sluice) and resumes its natural course.

The 250m recess in the coincident parish and woodland boundaries between **B** and **C** does not now appear on the ground exactly as represented on OS maps, including the latest editions. The OS maps indicate a curved recess in the fence line from **B** to **D**, whereas on the ground there is now a 20m right-angled inset at **B**, then a nearly straight fence with parallel ditch and bank which extends for c.75m to point **D**. Continuing from **D** with a slight angular deviation northward in parallel with the woodland fence, the bank and is higher becoming an increasingly prominent feature for c.170m, until it ends abruptly by another right-angled inset in the line of the woodland fence at **C**. The irregular crest of the bank reaches a maximum height of 3-4m above the valley floor near to its end at **C**. This higher section of the bank could be the earthwork recorded by the Howardian Hills surveyor as having the dimensions 40m15mx3.5m, though the map reference given does not fit. A length of 40m could only refer to the highest part of the bank near **C**. There is a continuous bank for 250m from **B** to **C**.

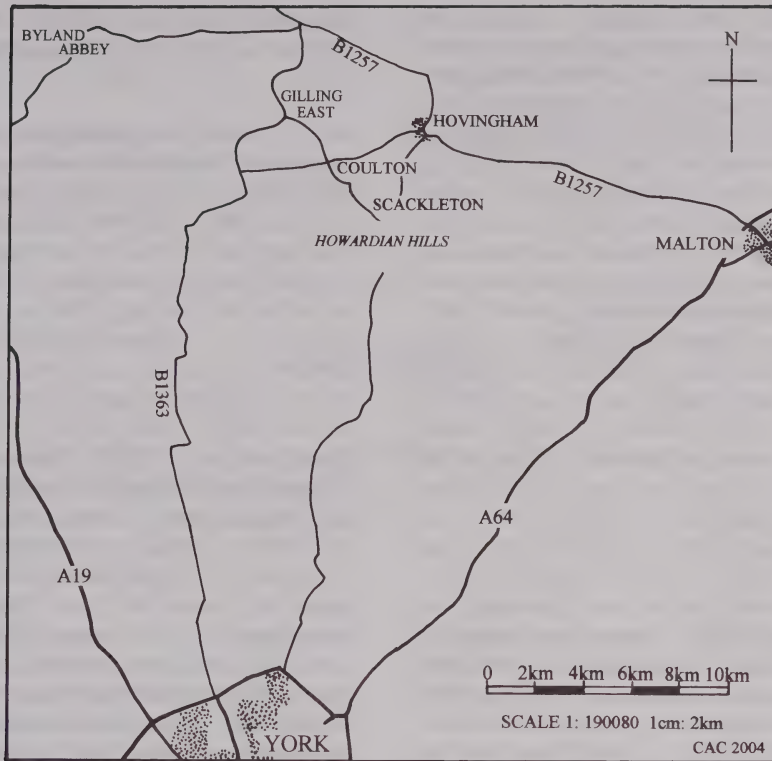


Figure 1

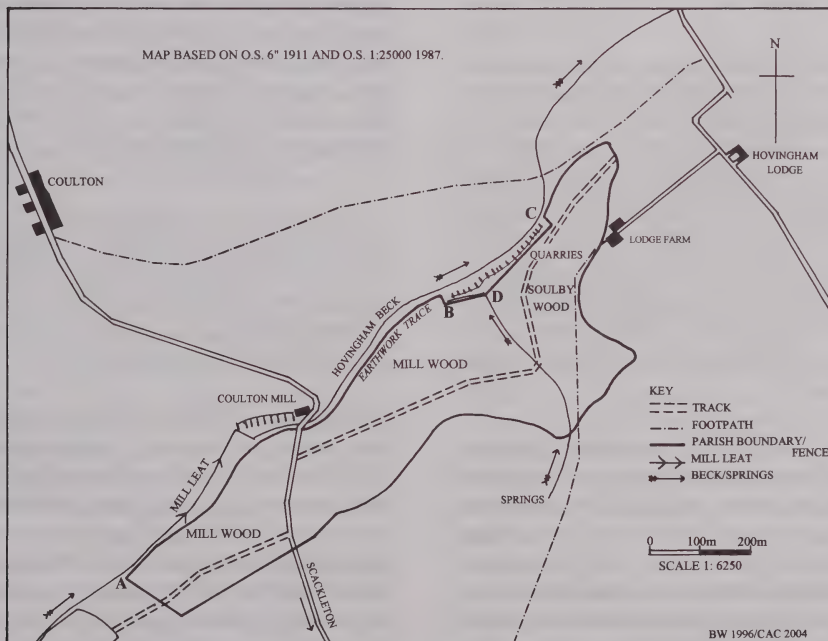


Figure 2

The ditch between **D** and **C** is now dry and partly infilled by slippage from the hillside. Near to **D** there is a fan of old outwash debris spread across the valley floor, there must have been a substantial overflow along 20m length where the bank is lower. At **D** the ditch receives a drainage gully from springs on the hillside; perhaps neglect of a disused mill leat had let to siltation and consequent overflow of the bank at a low point here. The drainage from the springs is now carried retrograde from **D** to **B** in a deep cut which then turns down to the beck alongside the right-angled inset in the boundary fence at **B**. This is probably a fairly recent improvement to the drainage, perhaps the line of the woodland fence being adjusted at the same time. From the corner of the woodland fence inset at **B** the line of the ditch from **D** to **B** continues as an intermittent shallow linear depression inside the wood. This can be traced as a contouring feature for c.300m almost to Coulton Mill, and could be the upstream section of the supposed mill leat. At its limit, near to Coulton Mill, it is nearly level with the course of the beck; the leat intake would be in this area.

At the 1996 site meeting of members from the two societies, the late Mrs Jennifer Kaner presented documentary evidence of a medieval Scackleton Mill.² Mrs Kaner had located a 13th century 'Deed of Exchange' recording that the Abbot and Convent of Byland had transferred their mill at Scackleton to Walter de Coulton, along with land between the leat of the mill and the 'water of Coulton'. This seemed a neat explanation for the recess in the parish boundary.

The Scackleton earthworks were revisited on 26th April 2002, in order to revise and correct sketch maps, relating them to outlines on the 1:10,000 OS. On previous visits no evidence of any stone construction was visible, but this day erosion near the top of the bank near **C** had exposed sandstone a few cm below the surface. It was not possible to see whether this was part of some

structure or just a boulder. Was this the site of a mill? Further field investigation was needed.

On 28th March 2003, John Harrison met members of Helmsley Archaeological and Historical Society at the site of the supposed Scackleton Mill. After fieldwalking the site, John suggested that the exposed sandstone noted on site visits 26/4/02 and 21/2/03, was the result of quarrying. During further discussion, John suggested that the most probable location for a mill structure was that of a small feature that of a turf mound, situated at the *bottom* of the bank near Hovingham Beck (**C** Fig 2). John reserved judgement until we had finished following an ill-defined 'feature', a sunken depression, which follows parallel to a boundary fence (*earthwork trace* Fig 2) through the wood almost to Coulton Mill (such 'features', being diagnostic of mill leats). The feature/earthwork trace was tracked through undergrowth and traced back to a tail leat at Coulton Mill. At this point John accepted that there was a strong case in support of our hypothesis. It was observed that the landowner had excavated deep ditches to drain the area of the debris fan described above so, destroying the characteristic form of the 'feature' shown on earlier visits. It was tentatively hypothesised that Scackleton Mill, was possibly superseded at a later date by Coulton (evidence being the in-filling of the leat by natural formation processes). For a medieval mill the flow of the Hovingham Beck would have been sufficient to provide enough power to operate a small corn mill. A spring, **D** (Fig 2), may have also been diverted to provide extra water flow.

In order to test this working hypothesis and the documentary evidence, it is hoped that a detailed survey of the site will eventually be possible this will entail: a survey the leat by levelling (to accord the flow of water, the drop should be approximately 18 inches). If the results of levelling attest the above, the next stage will be to probe the soil matrix of 'leat' and the 'mound'. Finally to excavate 2x2-metre trench in area of disruption, the

aim to locate the bottom of the 'leat', diagnostic evidence being a puddled watertight clay layer.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We are grateful to Mr John Harrison for his opinion and advice regarding further study and to Mr Nigel Judson for granting access to the site.

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Reviews

Rievaulx Abbey - Community, Architecture, Memory.

by Peter Fergusson and Stuart Harrison.

Yale University Press, Newhaven and London, 1999

ISBN 0300078315

Price: £65.00 (Hardback)

Rievaulx Abbey was the scene of an impressive event on November 24th, 1999. This was the ceremonial launch of this book. It was attended by a number of well-known academics, most with expertise in the history and archaeology of medieval monasteries. After short speeches, there was a prayer for Abbot William at his shrine. This was intoned in perfect unison by the Archbishop of York and the Abbot of Ampleforth - a truly ecumenical occasion, combining the historical Roman Catholic background to the monastery, and the present Anglican Church.

In the flyleaf summary, Rievaulx Abbey is described as 'one of the pre-eminent medieval ruins in Europe'. Nor only is this so in its architectural terms and its history, but to us in Ryedale, it is a place of unequalled seclusion. Its setting in a hamlet in the upper reaches of the River Rye is unmarred by any of the post-medieval features which might have accreted during post-medieval centuries; there is not even a shop or a pub. The Abbey ruins are normally studied from ground level in its English Heritage context, but fine bird's eye views can be seen both from Ashberry Hill on the west side, and from the National Trust Terrace on the east. We can learn from the new volume (p189) that the Duncombes made the latter vistas by cutting sight-lines through

the trees, unfolding different views of the ruins as one traverses the half-mile length of the Terrace. At each end of the sequence are two temples, one Doric, the other Ionic. This, as explained in chapter 11, was a deliberate attempt to frame the ruins in an historical setting, embracing both the classical and medieval past.

Not surprisingly, following the massive destruction of the Abbey in the 16th century and subsequent industrial exploitation of the valley, it was not until the early 19th century that the ruins became subjects for scholarly study. Earlier travellers were impressed principally by these picturesque views of the Abbey and valley. Since those days there have been repeated attempts to delineate the architecture and history of Rievaulx. The present volume is the latest and definitive survey, from two authors, one American (Fergusson) and one English (Harrison), with a major contribution from Glyn Coppack, himself a representative of the modern generation of archaeologist-historians in Europe.

The contents include a number of diverse topics, beginning with studies of the first monastic complex under Abbot William and the subsequent inspiring vision of St Aelred.

A straightforward general account of the Romanesque church is followed by studies of the unique Chapter House; 'Work and Rest' in the East Range; 'Sickness and Age' - the infirmary complex; 'Food and Warmth' - the South Range and its 13th century reconstruction in Gothic style; it is the latter which provided the most spectacular buildings which survive today. Though not as well-preserved as Fountains, many people prefer Rievaulx as a place to visit - complete enough to be understood as a monastic complex, but leaving plenty of scope for reconstructive thought, now well assisted by English Heritage's visual and audio aids and exhibitions.

More specialist chapters follow, on the Suppression, with an appendix on the details of the extent of valuable assets; the 'Wreck and Ruin' that followed; and Rievaulx in the 20th century. Appendices are provided by John Senior (stonework and quarries); Jenny Stopford on tiled pavements and floor decoration (these include a made-up circular pavement inside the Doric Temple on the Terrace), and a list of abbots.

Of major interest are a long list of 'Notes' - full of fascinating asides, and twenty pages of scholarly bibliography - invaluable to serious students; and a full index. This is not the place to discuss the complex architectural sequence and its relationship to written sources. One needs to study the book seriously, and then to revisit the ruins to test one's new understanding provided by Fergusson and Harrison; and then to go back to the text - *ad infinitum*. Ideally, the reader should take the book, and study it while examining the ruin -

in short bites; but the size and weight of the volume makes this difficult.

Since both authors are primarily architectural historians, archaeology gets short shrift. Indeed, there has been little archaeology at Rievaulx. All that has been done has been the usual unsupervised 'clearance' to elucidate or display the ruin. Only a few deeper small holes (such as that by Abbot William's shrine) have provided a tantalising glimpse of what lies beneath the ground. The late Tony Pacitto, whom had known the whole area over a lifetime, pointed out the superficial and 'traditional' description of the process to divert the Rye in stages (to provide more land for the monastic buildings) is simplistic. A glance at the meandering of the Rye further up the valley shows how complex the problems were faced by the monks.

The future may see extensive excavations, to clarify this process of reclamation, and uncover the numerous buildings and structures that are visible in geophysical survey and described in written sources; there is enough work here to occupy archaeologists the rest of this century.

Scholarly text is supplemented by a fine series of plans, elevations, and photographs - the latter mostly in colour and splendid in quality. This makes it possible for readers of any level of understanding to appreciate to monastic remains. The illustrations make the volume a delight to handle and study, and qualify it as a 'coffee-table' exhibit, disguising its essentially academic character.

Philip Rahtz

Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture, Volume VI *Northern Yorkshire*

by Professor James Lang. With contributions by Derek Craig, Rosemary Cramp, Louise Henderson. Specialist contributions on the inscriptions from John Higgitt and D. N. Parsons and the regional geology from John R. Senior.

British Academy/Oxford University Press, 2001; 347pp, including 1204 photographs, 20 figures and 4 tables.

ISBN 0-19-726256-2

Price £130.00 (Hardback)

Page references alone are to this volume.

This volume is the second by Professor James Lang on North Yorkshire Anglo-Saxon sculpture (see the *Ryedale Historian* 18 (1996-7) 23-25). It follows the same general layout of the first and of the other volumes of the *Corpus* - earlier research, the historical background, geology (including John Senior's comment on the utilisation of small-scale local sources for architectural details and sculpture, where only detailed local work will track down sources (p17)), a two-fold division of the sculpture into Anglian and Anglo-Scandinavian (discussed in terms of forms and ornament), the schools (this volume having Anglian as well as Anglo-Scandinavian), inscriptions and then the catalogue of sites, both written and pictorial; this is followed by a comprehensive form and motif table, a massive bibliography and index. Once again in the *Corpus* series, the volume is of the highest quality, in terms of both content and production.

Figs 4 and 5, which show the geographical distribution of the sculptures, are divided into sculptures earlier and later than c950. Whereas, the earlier Yorkshire volume was divided into Anglian and post-ninth century sculpture (Lang 1991, figs 3 and 4), reflecting the Scandinavian invasion and land settlement, with the final take-over of York in 866/7. By this second volume, Lang seems more confident in his view of the process of historical change that the sculptures reflect; that the large estates of the early period, both monastic and belonging to others members of the upper aristocracy, were gradually replaced by smaller holdings held by the lesser elite, a process that the Viking settlement may have accelerated but did not initiate. This may be reflected in the difference in the chronology

reflected by the maps; alternatively, it may simply be a more convenient point for division for the *Corpus* in general (*cf* for example Tweddle, Biddle and Kjolbye-Biddle 1995, figs 2 and 3). Ready comparability across the country seems to be an important aim of the project as a whole.

For readers of the *Ryedale Historian*, individual catalogue references will provide additional information to what they may know about a place in a different period; Well (p220), for instance, also has important Roman data. For this reader, the evidence for early centres with subordinate churches or other types of satellites is important; Ripon for example and its parallels with Kirby Hill, Northallerton and Catterick (p7). Lang also talks about Ripon at a later date; he says that the survival of the lorgnette motif in North Yorkshire and Cumbria may be due to the influence of

'a long established ecclesiastical landholder', namely Ripon; this suggestion 'is supported by the fact that Ripon survived as an important centre well into the tenth century, when, in 948, it is recorded that the minster was burnt by King Eadred of Wessex...The Scandinavian settlers in Cumbria and North Yorkshire must have received their Christian teaching from some centre, and if this was Ripon it may have been seen as support for the enemy by the Wessex King' (p44).

It is from asides like this that one longs to have had Lang's detailed overall assessment of this period.

Wensley is another surprise; it has two mid 8th to early 9th century grave-markers, cut in

relief (nos 8 and 9, pp224-7), a technique which Higgitt can parallel at about the same time at Tarbat in Scotland and in Ireland, borrowed possibly from the Continent or independently invented (p52). The presence of a lost monastery in this area is supported by the evidence of a plaque of similar date at West Witton (pp229-30).

Whitby is dealt with extensively in this volume, in the introductory chapters, in the main catalogue and an addendum that notes the most recent finds from excavations (64 items all told), and in the inscriptions (a dozen or so). It is suggested that Whitby's principal access was by the sea (p7), which could in part explain the wide range of contacts apparent in the sculpture, from the Monkwearmouth-Jarrow area (e.g. Whitby 53, p264-5), to Chelles, Gaul (p40). A sea route doesn't explain the contact across the North Yorkshire Moors between Whitby and Lythe (the latter possibly part of the early monastic estate (p26-7)) and both Lastingham (e.g. Lastingham no 9, Lang 1991, 171-2) and Kirkdale (eg Kirkdale nos 7 and 8 which may have shared a stone source with the coastal sites (Lang 1991, 161-3). Was contact with York overland, or by the circuitous sea and river routes favoured by Senior for stone artefacts (p19)?

The origins of Whitby are uncertain. Was it the only place called *Streanaeshalch* or did it, at an early date, share its name with a royal estate just outside York (present Strensall) (Butler 1986, 44-50; Rahtz 1995, 1-2)? Either way, its initial known associations were both early and royal. Amongst its sculpture are perhaps the earliest examples of free-standing stone crosses in England, that are closely related in the form of dressing and decoration to York *stelae* (p24); the Whitby plain cross group is also early, although there is no definite royal connection; (Higgitt rejects the identification of Aelflaed on Whitby 47 pp51 and 258-9). Lang suggests that both the York Minster *stelae* and the Whitby plain crosses

monastery...Despite the monastery's origins in Lindisfarne and ultimately Iona, Whitby's view tuned increasingly towards the European continent' (p40).

The initial chapters of this volume several times (e.g. pp30, 34) remind us of broad strands of influence, whether from the nearby-Continent, Rome or Byzantium direct, also that similarities may not be due to direct contact between English sites, but acquired from wider trends.

To return specifically to Whitby, the volume goes far in advancing the study of the early stones from Whitby, both individually and by the extension by context. It maps (fig 19) the areas of early excavation in the 1920's and tabulates (table 3) in print for the first time what is known about the location of these stones. A further step could be to superimpose this gridded plan with Rahtz's suggested layout of the early monastery (Rahtz 1995, fig 2); a study then of this with the table could demonstrate whether the finds spots are likely to be meaningful in terms of the buildings they were associated with or, instead, that they reflect later movement.

Altogether, this volume is a masterpiece and an enormous contribution to the whole *history* of pre-conquest Yorkshire. As David Wilson comments in his preface, James Lang was interested in work far beyond the sculpture. With all that has been discussed, with the splendidly thorough bibliography compiled by Derek Craig (an essential tool) the (unusually) useable index, we are equipped for another, very fruitful, generation of research, both historical and archaeological. James Lang supported so ably by Rosemary Cramp and Louise Henderson and the reticent Derek Craig, is to be congratulated for the result of his heroic last stand.

Lorna Watts

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'look to Continental models, especially in north-eastern Gaul in the area of Chelles, a centre associated with Hild and her

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Levisham: a case study in local history

by Betty Halse

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Levisham village stands so high among its fields, surrounded by its moors, there is a sense of achievement even today when the steep approach with its unexpectedly sharp bends reaches level ground where solid stone houses line the main - and only - street. Looking down towards the Vale of Pickering from a distance of six miles Levisham may seem detached but as the study of its records by a local history group shows, its history has always been affected by the course of events in the wider world.

That is the theme of a book published in 2003, 'Levisham a case study in local history' by Betty Halse. She is one of a group of Levisham inhabitants who, more than ten years ago, began to collect documents relating to the village. That, even in those early days some were computer literate and others eager to learn, gave the project a head start. Mrs Halse sets out to show how, at any given time, events described in the documents relate to the situation in the country at large. As any aspiring local historian knows, it is not an easy task; she achieves it by imposing a system that she hopes will serve as a model for others.

Each chapter follows the same pattern. Chronology - relevant dates to form anchor points. Sources - useful for local historians and where they may be found. Background information - to put the theme of each

chapter into context. Lastly, one aspect of the history of Levisham presented as a case study illustrating how available sources can be used to develop an understanding of a particular historical theme.

Among the aspects of Levisham here described is a reading of what the lie of the land around the village tells about its occupation from prehistoric times to the present day. Getting a living on these bleak uplands was mainly from rearing sheep, a business that, for hundreds of years was undertaken by the monks of the numerous great abbeys in the neighbourhood. Levisham's monastic grange was established by the Gilbertine canons of Malton Priory. The other important outside influence in medieval times upon the lives of the villagers was the fact that it lay within the bounds of the Royal Forest of Pickering. The fourteenth century records refer to many events connected with this special, often harsh, form of administration, thereby allowing Mrs Halse to present one of the most lucid accounts of Forest Law this writer has encountered.

The book is splendidly illustrated with maps, charts and drawings and has a bibliography that anyone wishing to know more about the history of Ryedale and its environs will find invaluable.

Anne Taylor

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